



# Labor & Economic Briefing

David C. Hollister, Director

Issue 8

October 10, 2003

Here is a summary of headlining accomplishments from the last 30 days:

## Encouraging Economic & Urban Development

**Governor Creates New Department to Promote Job Creation, Economic Development:** Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm submitted on Oct. 2 Executive Order 2003-18, creating the new Department of Labor and Economic Growth. The Governor's action follows the filing of Executive Order 2003-17 which rescinded Executive Order 2003-14 that originally created DLEG. Under the new order, DLEG will include an independent and autonomous Workers' Compensation Appellate Commission. While the new commission will operate in the same manner as the current commission, it will include five members rather than seven, all of whom will be subject to new accountability and performance standards. The appellate commissioners will also be required to meet the tougher eligibility criteria now required of worker's compensation magistrates. The executive order allows the new department to consolidate staff functions for the Appellate Commission and Worker's Compensation Board of Magistrates, reducing the costs associated with overlapping administrative activities. In an additional cost saving measure, the Board of Magistrates will also be reduced from 30 to 26 members. The Worker's Compensation Qualifications Advisory Commission (QAC) will be charged with recommending annual reductions or increases in the number of magistrates or appellate commissioners based on case loads and productivity. This preserves the flexibility to meet changes in caseloads and thus better serve citizens. The quorum for the new 10-member QAC will increase from five members to six members to guarantee that QAC cannot act unless both employee and employer representatives participate. The new executive order also separates the Michigan Broadband Development Authority and the Michigan Extension Telecommunications Rights-of-Way Oversight (METRO) Authority. While both remain in the DLEG jurisdiction, the separation will ensure independence and autonomy is maintained between the two authorities.



**Governor  
Jennifer M.  
Granholm**

Other highlights of the new department include:

- Most regulatory functions that relate specifically to commercial, business, and workers' issues will be in the DLEG, such as the Office of Financial & Insurance Services, the Bureau of Commercial Services, the Michigan Public Service Commission, the Construction Code Division, the Unemployment Insurance Agency, the Workers' Compensation Agency, Workplace Safety and Health, the Michigan Employment Relations Commission, the Michigan Tax Tribunal, and the Liquor Control Commission.
- The Bureau of Worker's and Unemployment Compensation will be divided into three agencies within the DLEG: Unemployment Insurance Agency; Workers' Compensation Agency; and the Wage and Hour Division.
- CIS Functions to be transferred away from the DLEG include: Bureau of Family Services – which oversees adult foster care, homes for the aged, child care homes/centers, child caring institutions, child placement agencies, adult/children camps, and court-operated facilities - will move to the Family Independence Agency (FIA) and be renamed the Office of Child and Adult Licensing; the Bureau of Health Services that regulates health professionals will be transferred to the Department of Community Health; the Bureau of Health Systems that regulates hospitals, emergency medical services, and nursing homes will be transferred to the Department of Community Health.
- Among those autonomous agencies that will be moved to the DLEG are: the Michigan Broadband Development Authority; Michigan Economic Growth Authority; Michigan Next Energy Authority; and, the Michigan Strategic Fund which is the state's partner in the inter-local agreement creating the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.
- The reorganization consolidates fire code service functions within the new department. Arson investigation and related law enforcement activities will remain at Michigan State Police.

**Manufacturing Matters Theme Pressed:** Governor Granholm took her "Manufacturing Matters" message to Lansing's Blue Ribbon Committee to Keep GM and American Axle employees in Detroit recently. At both meetings she discussed the tremendous loss of manufacturing jobs within the past three years and her plan to bring a coalition of states together to address the challenges manufacturing faces in the future. This fall Governor Granholm will convene a summit of key Michigan leaders to determine solutions our state and the nation can take to preserve the manufacturing industry and the hundreds of thousands of jobs that rely on it.

---

**Former Head of Ohio's Economic Development Efforts to Lead the MEDC:** The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Executive Committee announced Sept. 18 that veteran state and community economic development leader, Donald E. Jakeway, will be the corporation's new president and chief executive officer. This position is responsible for leading the MEDC's 270-member staff in economic development efforts, including economic policy development, tourism promotion, business retention and attraction, technology development, marketing, and community development functions. Jakeway will also develop and implement a strategic plan, annual operating goals and performance objectives for the MEDC. Jakeway has more than 30 years of economic development experience at both the state and community levels. For the past six years, Jakeway has been president and CEO of the Regional Growth Partnership based in Toledo, Ohio. This private/public nonprofit development corporation is dedicated to fostering economic development and technology enhancement opportunities in the 11 northwest Ohio counties. Since 2001, the Growth Partnership helped to create more than 3,800 new jobs and spur more than \$1.1 billion in private investment. Before heading the Growth Partnership, Jakeway served for seven years as director of the Ohio Department of Development. This department, responsible for all economic development activities in the state, was made up of more than 12 divisions and 550 employees with an overall budget responsibility for \$1.5 billion. Under Jakeway's leadership, the department was named twice as one of the top 10 development agencies in the world and the state was ranked the top state in the nation for new business expansions three years in a row both by Site Selection magazine. Jakeway also has held economic development director positions with the cities of Sarasota (Fla.), Lakewood (Ohio) and Cleveland (Ohio). He has a Master's of Business Administration from Sarasota University and received his Bachelor's of Science degree from Ashland University. Jakeway will begin his new role at the MEDC in October.

## Creating New Investments & Job Opportunities

**BorgWarner Corporate Headquarters Will Move to Auburn Hills Creating 146 New Jobs:** The MEDC has helped convince BorgWarner Inc. to relocate its corporate headquarters from Chicago to Auburn Hills. The company plans to invest \$8.9 million in the project and create 146 new jobs, including 90 directly by the company. BorgWarner is a leading global supplier of highly engineered components and systems for vehicle powertrain applications. The MEDC offered a Single Business Tax credit worth more than \$2.6 million over the next 10 years to help convince BorgWarner to relocate its headquarters to Auburn Hills. The company currently employs nearly 1,000 people at five different locations in Michigan. The city of Auburn Hills is expected to approve a tax abatement valued at approximately \$686,000 for eight years to further facilitate the project. The MEDC worked closely with Oakland County to bring the project to Auburn Hills. Construction on the new facility is expected to begin in early 2004. According to an economic analysis conducted by the University of Michigan, it is estimated that 90 jobs will be created directly by the headquarters relocation with another 56 spun off as a result of increased economic activity. The project will result in a net state revenue gain of more than \$9.9 million over the life of the Single Business Tax credits.

**Hyundai Technical Center to Relocate and Expand in Superior Township Creating 751 Jobs:** Hyundai America Technical Center Inc. will relocate and expand its headquarters in Superior Township near Ann Arbor. The Korean-based company plans to invest a total of \$117 million in the two-phase project. The new 168,000 square foot expandable facility will be located near the intersection of Geddes and LeForge roads. The project will create 85 jobs within the first year and a total of 751 new jobs by 2024, including 400 directly by the company. The Hyundai America Technical Center had considered locating its new expanded headquarters facility in Alabama where it is currently constructing a manufacturing facility. The offer of a high-tech Single Business Tax (SBT) credit worth more than \$22 million over a 20-year period helped convince the company to expand and create new jobs in Michigan. Superior Township also offered assistance with a local tax abatement for the project worth an estimated \$6.4 million over 12 years. Hyundai America Technical Center President Dr. Won Suk Cho said, "We considered several locations including sites in other states but the support of Governor Granholm, MEDC officials and Superior Township Supervisor Bill McFarlane convinced us that Michigan was the best choice." According to an economic analysis conducted by the University of Michigan, it is estimated that the relocation and expansion will create an additional 351 Michigan jobs as a result of increased economic activity in addition to the 400 jobs created directly by the company. The company's increased operations will result in a net state revenue gain of more than \$80.8 million over the life of the SBT credits. The Hyundai America Technical Center was established in 1986 and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hyundai Motor Company of Korea. The company conducts emissions testing, engineering, research, development and design for Hyundai and Kia automobiles. The tech center is currently headquartered in Pittsfield Township near the site of the new facility and employs 41 people.

**Pilkington North America Chooses Clinton for Major Expansion Creating 252 New Jobs:** The MEDC helped convince Pilkington North America to consolidate and expand its value-added glass manufacturing operations in Clinton. The company plans to invest \$3.2 million to facilitate the expansion, which is expected to create a total of 252 new jobs. Pilkington had considered expanding in Indiana, where it currently operates a manufacturing facility. A Single Business Tax credit offered today worth \$474,000 over a five-year period helped convince the company to stay and grow in Michigan. The Village of Clinton also approved a tax abatement valued at about \$90,000 to help attract the project. According to an economic analysis conducted by the University of Michigan, it is estimated that 120 jobs will be created directly by the expansion and another 132 indirectly as a result of increased economic activity. The project will result in a net state revenue gain of more than \$6.9 million over the life of the Single Business Tax credits. Pilkington North America is a subsidiary of United Kingdom-based Pilkington plc. Pilkington is a world leader in the development and manufacture of glass products for the building, automotive and technical glass markets with operations in 24 countries in Europe, the Americas and Asia-Pacific.

---

## Keeping Business in Michigan & Helping Them Grow

**Grant Used to Counter Effects of Dead River Flood to Help Marquette Rebuild:** The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) is providing a \$474,149 federal Community Development Block Grant to help the city of Marquette rebuild after last May's devastating Dead River flood. The City of Marquette will use the grant for infrastructure improvements, emergency stabilization, debris removal and replacement of a city bike path. The flooding occurred after an earthen dike burst sending an estimated nine billion gallons of water down the Dead River to Lake Superior. Marquette Mayor Jerry Irby said, "This is particularly welcome in light of the funding challenges we face as well as the flood emergency we experienced this past spring. The MEDC has consistently shown itself to be an important partner with the city for economic development and public infrastructure support projects."

**Muskegon's Relocated Tech Incubator Opens:** Muskegon Area First has opened the Whetstone Project, a warehouse-style business incubator in Muskegon Heights. More than 200 people turned out to a recent open house and subsequent tour of the facility. The event also celebrated the incubator's newest tenant, Worksighted, an IT company specializing in networks, systems, Internet and consulting services. Office space in the building is available for as little as \$350 a month, which includes DSL Internet connection, basic furnishings, phone system hardware and multiple professional services.

**New Job Training Program Rollout:** MEDC announced the 2004 Economic Development Job Training (EDJT) program in Lansing. The EDJT program seeks to ensure that Michigan has the training resources to retain and attract smart businesses and people. In support of this goal, the state Legislature appropriated more than \$10 million to the MEDC for the administration of the 2004 program. Funds will be used to increase the skills of Michigan workers to help them better compete in today's global marketplace. At least 75 percent of this year's EDJT grants will be awarded to community colleges or a consortium of community colleges and other eligible applicants.

**MEDC Announces Fall Career Fair Involvement:** The MEDC is participating in 11 college career fairs this fall, beginning with Purdue University on Sept. 16. Michigan company representatives and MEDC staff will discuss the many high-tech career opportunities Michigan has to offer after graduation. Students will be encouraged to search job openings and post their resumes on Michigan Careersite at <http://www.michigan.org>. The MEDC created the Michigan Recruitment Alliance in 2001 as a partnership with Michigan employers looking to hire the best and brightest students from select Midwest universities. Over the past three years the MEDC has participated in more than 100 college career fairs and grown the Alliance's membership to include more than 150 companies.

**WSU Begins Alternative Energy Masters Program:** Wayne State University's College of Engineering announced that the first course in a master's degree program in alternative energy technology (AET) is planned for the upcoming winter semester. The graduate level course, Fundamentals of Alternative Energy I, is the first step toward a new engineering master's degree program in alternative energy. The university also has plans for an AET graduate certificate program and an undergraduate concentration. The education program is supported by a \$300,000 grant from NextEnergy, the state of Michigan's economic development effort to make Michigan a major center in alternative energy technologies. Lansing Community College, Lawrence Technological University in Southfield and Kettering University in Flint have also received NextEnergy grants to establish alternative energy associate degree and certificate programs.

**Alternative Energy Event Held in Michigan:** NextEnergy hosted the National Hydrogen Association's fall Hydrogen Safety Codes and Standards Workshop in Detroit on September 22-23. The event drew 150 people from throughout Michigan and beyond. Participants were among the first to see the National Renewable Energy Lab's guidebook to assist Fire Marshals and other code officials in permitting hydrogen energy projects. On the second day of the workshop participants drove the Ford Focus fuel cell vehicle and viewed GM's Autonomy concept fuel cell vehicle.

**Michigan Counties Top in E-Gov:** From a field of 150 entrants across the nation, Kent and Washtenaw counties were ranked among the top 10 counties for e-government services in their respective population categories in the 2003 Digital Counties Survey. The rankings recognize counties for using technology to improve services for businesses and citizens. Kent County tied for seventh place among counties with a population of 500,000 or greater, while Washtenaw County was ranked 10th among counties with 250,000 to 499,999 residents. The survey was conducted by the Center for Digital Government, the National Association of Counties, and Government Technology magazine.

**MEDC Supports Goals of U.S. – Arab Economic Forum; Expects Event to Benefit State Long-Term:** Michigan Department of Consumer & Industry Services Director David C. Hollister helped open the U.S.-Arab Economic Forum (<http://www.usaeForum.org>) conference held in Detroit in September by welcoming all the guests to Michigan. The forum was designed to foster growth, development and trade between the United States and the Middle East. Southeast Michigan has nearly 200,000 Arab Americans and Arab immigrants—the largest concentration of Arabs outside of the Middle East. The forum uses three days of roundtables, plenary sessions, networking meetings, interactive workshops and thematic dinners to build a foundation for increased economic activity between the U.S. and Arab countries. Saudi Arabia is already the 10th biggest export market for Michigan products, and Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt are all in the top 40.

---

**Governor's University Summit Encourages Public/Private Sector Collaboration:** Governor Jennifer M. Granholm praised the recommendations unveiled at the Governor's University Summit on Economic Development and Collaboration, saying that the new strategies for technology transfer will greatly aid Michigan's economic development efforts. "This summit was an excellent opportunity for representatives from the private sector and university officials to discuss ways to partner to move technology and ideas from the research lab to the manufacturing floor," Granholm said, "The recommendations will serve as a blueprint for moving university-generated research to market with the help of Michigan's great entrepreneurs." Approximately 200 high-level university officials from across the state met in Lansing to develop technology transfer strategies and review recommendations that resulted from workgroups conducted through the summer months. The summit featured presentations and discussions of the recommendations, and culminated with several action items. Further discussions will take place in the coming months between the Governor's office, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, President's Council, State Universities of Michigan, and representatives from the public and private sectors to implement these recommendations.

**Michigan Investment and Commercialization Successes Celebrated with 4th Annual Awards Ceremony:** MEDC officials honored several organizations and individuals on Sept. 24th for their successful commercialization endeavors at the Michigan Investment and Commercialization Success Celebration held at the Michigan State Capitol Rotunda. Irvin D. Reid, MEDC Executive Committee member and Wayne State University president, distributed a total of 10 awards for excellence in commercialization in the fields of life sciences, advanced automotive technology, alternative energy, small tech, venture capital, angel investing and university and private sector partnerships. The nominees were chosen on the basis of innovation, success in the marketplace and their contributions to Michigan's economy. The following is a list of winners in each category: **Life Sciences** - DNA Software, Inc., Ann Arbor; **Advanced Automotive Technology** - GS Engineering, Houghton; **Small Tech** - Dendritic Nanotechnologies, Inc., Mt. Pleasant and Delphi Corporation, Troy; **Alternative Energy** - Adaptive Materials, Inc., Ann Arbor; **Life Sciences/Venture Capital** - QuatRX Pharmaceuticals Company, Ann Arbor; **Venture Capital and Angel Investors** - Arboretum Ventures, Ann Arbor and National City, Kalamazoo; **University/Private Sector Partnerships** - Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc., Bloomfield Hills. Special recognition was given to Western Michigan University and Southwest Michigan First for their roles in retaining workers throughout Pfizer's acquisition of Pharmacia. The two hosted job fairs and workshops to provide networking, business training and new company formation assistance.

## Boosting Michigan's Tourism Industry

**Travel Michigan Snags National Award:** The National Council of State Tourism Directors recently honored Travel Michigan with a Mercury Award as winner of the Broadcast -Radio Commercial category. The winning spot focused on young Stanley Biggs talking about his warm weather vacation in Michigan. The Mercury Award was created by the National Council of State Tourism Directors to recognize excellence and creative accomplishment in state tourism marketing and promotion, and to inspire the continued development of truly imaginative and exciting destination marketing and promotion programs.

## Promoting Energy-Efficiency and Protecting the Environment

**CIS Now Accepting Applications from Builders for Federal Grants to Build Energy-Efficient Homes:** The CIS Energy Office is now accepting applications from builders for grants up to \$8,000 to build energy-efficient houses. The CIS Energy Office will be awarding five grants for up to \$8,000 in the ENERGY STAR Home Grant program as an incentive for Michigan builders to utilize the latest technology to reduce energy costs and pollution. Applications can be obtained at the Energy Office web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/energyoffice> under Residential programs or by contacting John Sarver at (517) 241-6280 or via e-mail at [jhsarve@michigan.gov](mailto:jhsarve@michigan.gov). The deadline for the 2004 grants is December 15, 2003. Builders compete for the grants based on energy efficiency, marketing plans and innovations. Every house must obtain a Five Star rating to be eligible for the grants. Home energy ratings help buyers identify energy efficient homes as well as understand energy costs and how to lower them.

**Two More Grandville Public School Buildings to Receive ENERGY STAR Awards:** Grandville Public Schools has received the ENERGY STAR Building Label for two additional buildings, Central Elementary and West Elementary. The district now has a total of three high-energy efficiency schools! The ENERGY STAR Building Label (<http://www.energystar.gov>) is awarded to buildings that exhibit high-energy efficiency without sacrificing occupant safety and comfort. Labeled buildings receive national recognition for their energy performance. Central and West Elementaries received a bronze plaque from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to mount in the building entrance visible to occupants, visitors and community members. Wyandotte is the only other school district in Michigan that has achieved this standard.

*At right, Jack Timmer, Director of Building Operations for Grandville; Audrie Washington, Energy Star Program Manager for U.S. EPA; Brandy Minikey, CIS Energy Office Engineer; and Ron Caniff, Grandville Superintendent of Schools show off the Grandville Public Schools new ENERGY STAR plaque.*





---

## Making Homeownership More Affordable

**Affordable Housing Agency Gets New Acting Executive Director:** Rick Laber received the nod from Authority board members to become the acting executive director of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) it was announced today. MSHDA is under the umbrella of the Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services (CIS) and as a quasi-public agency, has invested more than \$4 billion in housing for Michigan's low- and moderate-income renters, homebuyers and homeowners through the sale of bonds to private investors. Laber, previously director of MSHDA's Finance Division, replaces James L. Logue III who left to pursue other career interests earlier this month after serving as executive director for nearly 12 years. Laber joined the Authority in May 2001, as the Director of Finance, responsible for MSHDA's accounting, finance, auditing, budget, and mortgage service functions. Since the beginning of the year, Laber also directed the Office of Single Family, including loan origination oversight, underwriting activities, purchasing and homeownership counseling, and the administration of the single-family mortgage credit certificate program. Prior to Laber's arrival at the Authority, he was chief financial officer of Security Savings Bank, FSB, Community First Bank and eZ Bancorp, Inc. from 1992 through 2001. He also served on several boards of organizations and is currently an at-large member of the board of directors of the State Employees Credit Union. Laber is a native of Michigan, graduated from Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, and lives in Grand Ledge with his wife Brenda and their two children.



*Rick Laber,  
MSHDA Acting  
Director*

## Matching Employers & Workers via the Internet

**Nearly 30,000 Resumes Added to Talent Bank:** The Michigan Talent Bank posted 28,371 new resumes bringing the total searchable resumes to 610,270. New business registrations added: 887. More than 6,000 job orders were posted bringing the total job openings posted to 20,565 - an increase of 3,100 jobs over the previous month.

**Michigan's Career Portal Adds Teacher Resources:** The Michigan Career Portal (<http://www.michigan.gov/careers>) was enhanced by the addition of a Teacher Resources module which provides a one-stop reference source for educational materials, books, software, videos, learning packs, tests, and related data.

## Assisting Jobless Workers

**Granholm Announces Funds for Workers Impacted by Foreign Competition:** Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and the Michigan Department of Career Development (MDCD) announced the award of \$137,364 in Workforce Investment Act-National Emergency Grant (WIA-NEG) funding for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and North American Free Trade Agreement - Trade Adjustment Assistance (NAFTA-TAA) programs. Career Alliance, Inc., will receive \$100,634 and Michigan Works! Region 7B Employment and Training Consortium will receive \$36,730 to provide funding for training, job search, and relocation assistance to workers whose jobs were determined by the U.S. Department of Labor to have been lost due to foreign competition.

**Employer Filed Claims Program Wins National IT Award:** The Employer Filed Claims (EFC) program, within the Bureau of Workers' and Unemployment Compensation, has won an information technology award from the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO). The program earned the award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology in the category of Digital Government - Government to Business. The award is among several of the organization's Recognition Awards for 2003, which are given annually to states that have implemented programs that have made important contributions to the operation of state government. The EFC program was among 10 winners selected from 128 nominations submitted by 33 states. EFC allows employers to electronically submit unemployment claims on behalf of their laid-off workers. Five of Michigan's major employers are participating in the program - General Motors, Ford Motor Co., DaimlerChrysler, Visteon and Delphi. Next year, the program intends to expand by including other large employers. The EFC program reduces workload and costs for businesses, as they no longer need to submit verifying information on paper for every claim filed. The program also significantly reduces turn-around time, allowing workers to collect their unemployment checks faster and without having to visit a local BWUC office. In addition, the bureau saves by reducing paperwork and staff costs while speeding-up delivery of services. In fact, over 125,000 face-to-face intake interviews and paper forms were eliminated by having companies submit claims electronically for their employees. The EFC program was nominated for the NASCIO award by Michigan's Department of Information Technology.

**Third Parties Can Now File Prevailing Wage Complaints:** The process for filing a prevailing wage complaint has been expanded to allow third parties to file. Typically, a third party would be a union, filing a complaint on behalf of workers at a job site. In the past, the Wage & Hour program would only accept complaints directly from the affected construction worker(s). Along with the reporting change, the Wage & Hour program redesigned the prevailing wage complaint form this year to allow third parties to file the complaint. The complaint form can be obtained from and submitted to the Office of Investigations & Compliance/Wage and Hour.

---

**Governor Announces Mailing of First Checks for Additional Jobless Benefits:** Gov. Granholm met with some of the first jobless workers to receive the second tier of federal Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC-X) at the Michigan Works! Southgate Service Center on September 4. BWUC mailed applications for the TEUC-X program to potentially eligible jobless workers on August 18. It then mailed Extended Benefit applications on September 6. The first batch of TEUC-X checks was issued during the first week of September to eligible jobless workers. EB payments were mailed out the week of September 21. Over the life of the two programs, the bureau expects to pay out about \$206 million in benefits to an estimated 53,000 long-term unemployed workers in the state.



*Above left, Gov. Jennifer Granholm and Rep. Barbara Farrah (D-Southgate) listen as CIS Deputy Director Dave Plawecki talks about the Bureau's efforts to launch the TEUC-X and EB programs. Rep. Farrah co-sponsored the legislation that allowed TEUC-X and EB to be paid in Michigan. Above right, three jobless workers who were among the first to receive their TEUC-X benefits stand with Gov. Granholm, Rep. Farrah and Deputy Director Plawecki.*

## Providing More Efficient Services to Better Serve Customers

**Bureau of Workers' & Unemployment Compensation Saves Dollars Through Recycling:** The Bureau of Workers' & Unemployment Compensation recently switched to recycling non-confidential documents, which is expected to save the state \$60,000 a year! Previously the bureau was paying \$250 a skid for materials to be destroyed, but is now receiving money for the same materials picked up by a recycling firm. Employees are now sorting documentation so that non-confidential materials can be recycled at a significant cost savings.

**Michigan Fire Service Organizations Applaud Governor's Consolidation of Fire Services Functions into the New Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth:** The Michigan Professional Firefighters Union, the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Michigan Fire Inspectors Society applauded Governor Jennifer M. Granholm's consolidation of fire service functions into the newly announced Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth. The groups believe this new move will enable the fire service in Michigan to be more coordinated, responsive and cost-efficient when responding to fire safety and homeland security concerns and issues. "Currently fire service issues are spread throughout three or four different departments of state government. This consolidation is long overdue and we credit our new Governor for responding to not only the needs of the fire service but more importantly to the needs of the public whom we are sworn to serve," said Chief Jim Peterson, President of the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs. The Governor has proposed in her recently released Executive Order Creating the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth to transfer fire service related programs including the Fire Fighters Training Council and the Fire Marshal to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth. "It was confusing to people to have the majority of fire safety responsibilities in one department and the State Fire Marshal in another. Most people rightly assume the State Fire Marshal and the Office of Fire Safety are part of the same team. We're very pleased that now they will be," said Chief Ed Holtcamp, Legislative Liaison of the Northern Michigan Fire Chiefs Association and the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs. The Fire Fighters Training Council is key to ensuring that Michigan fire fighters have the skills sets they need in these complex times. It will continue as a Type 1 agency within the new department.

## Providing Career Development Resources

**Michigan Rehabilitation Services Assists Michiganians with Disabilities:** Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) helped place 535 Michiganians with disabilities in jobs in the past month. MRS also provided job-preparation services, such as vocational counseling and training, to 874 Michiganians with disabilities who want to go to work. During this timeframe, MRS also provided services to 89 Michigan employers who requested assistance in such areas as ergonomic assessments, referral of qualified workers, and reasonable accommodation recommendations.

---

**Workforce Transition Section (WTS) Assists Employers and Displaced Workers:** The Workforce Transition Section (WTS) responded to 25 notices of planned plant closures or mass layoffs in the last month. Contact was made with employers and union representatives in response to receipt of a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notice, letter, phone call, newspaper article, or other means of notification. A brief overview of available dislocated worker services was given, and depending on the number of jobs impacted, a formal on-site Rapid Response Team Meeting was scheduled or arrangements were made for the local Michigan Works! Agency to meet with the affected employees to provide information on available services. Other services provided:

- Conducted nine Rapid Response Meetings with employers (and union representatives, where employees are represented by a collective bargaining agreement).
- Responded to 74 phone calls and 29 e-mails from individuals, company/union representatives, and service providers who requested information or clarification of issues related to the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act and dislocated worker services.
- Attended four worker orientation sessions and six Joint Adjustment Committee meetings (JAC). Joint Adjustment Committees are established to provide a more proactive, participatory response to large plant closings or mass layoffs.

**Celebrating Accomplishments of Small Business Owners with Disabilities:** The accomplishments of small business owners with disabilities and the human service professionals who support their endeavors were recognized at the Small Business Awards Banquet held Aug. 29 at the Sheraton Lansing Hotel. This is the second year Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) has sponsored the event. This year's co-sponsors were Merrill Lynch - Smith Stiles and Landolt Group, SHANTI, Inc., and Mahjoory & Associates. **Lisa Crain**, owner and manager of Crain's Diversified Services in Saginaw, was named Small Business Owner of the Year. She started her transcription and invoicing business with the help of MRS three years ago and has since hired others with disabilities who work from their homes. "I knew there had to be others in the same or similar situations and I wanted to help them feel like a valuable member of the workforce again," Crain said. Also honored were:

- **Michael Vuillemot**, associate director of the LaBelle Entrepreneurial Center at Central Michigan University, recipient of the Small Business Resource Award
- **Holly LaBelle**, rehabilitation assistant at the Mt. Pleasant office of MRS, recipient of the Small Business Service Award
- **Brenda Scharrer**, counselor at the Port Huron office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services, recipient of the Small Business Champion of the Year Award
- **RoseAnne Foley** of Traverse City, author and small business consultant, recipient of the Heidi Van Arnen Small Business Development Lifetime Achievement Award
- **SHANTI, Inc.**, of East Lansing, recipient of the Small Business Sponsorship Award
- **Robert E. Davis** of Grand Ledge, recently retired state director of MRS, recipient of a special Small Business Recognition Award



*Bob Johnson of the CIS Executive Office speaks at the Small Business Awards Banquet held to recognize small business owners with disabilities.*

**Employment Service Agency Handles Foreign Labor Requests:** During July and August, the Employment Service Agency forwarded 530 foreign labor certifications to the U.S. Department of Labor in Chicago. These certifications represent businesses that are one step closer to final approval toward bringing foreign workers to Michigan. This is a relatively long process, since employers must document that there is no domestic labor willing, able and qualified to fill their vacancies. In a related foreign labor area, over 600 prevailing wage requests were processed via Michigan's Alien Labor Certification Web site, found at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd>. Prevailing wage requests are required to obtain a H-1B visa, which permits temporary professional workers to come to Michigan to fill business needs in specialty occupations.

**Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month:** The Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs was extremely busy planning for Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM), September 15 through October 15. Many activities and events are being held in most major cities throughout Michigan, and are sponsored by community-based organizations that celebrate Hispanic heritage. The Commission co-sponsored a HHM event with the Michigan Hispanic Caucus for a day filled with activities at the State Capitol on October 1, which was followed by the Michigan Hispanic Caucus leadership awards and scholarship dinner in the evening.

**School Reports Reveal Progress in Career and Technical Education Programs:** The Office of Career and Technical Preparation (OCTP) reviewed end-of-year reports (EOYs) for the 2002-2003 grant year that were submitted by the school regions. OCTP also provided technical assistance to the field during the last month when reviews required revision and/or clarification of the EOYs. Reports reflected significant progress on local efforts to align curriculum and resources and provide high-quality services to career and technical education programs.

**OCTP Hosts Three Professional Development Events:** The Office of Career and Technical Preparation (OCTP) held three professional development events for teachers, administrators and school employees including:

- A Sept. 4 workshop on how schools may prepare for on-site monitoring of state and federal grants administered by OCTP. The training provided assistance for school employees of the region serving as the pilot site for the new state monitoring system called Technical Review, Assistance and Compliance (TRAC). The actual on-site monitoring pilot visit was held Sept. 29.



---

■ The Career Planning and Education Unit conducted a technical assistance workshop Sept. 16. Eighty-two new teachers attended the full-day workshop. This workshop focused on state-approved curriculum, classroom management activities, local/state/federal funding, U.S. Department of Education career clusters, and learning-to-teach techniques. Evaluations of the workshop indicated that participants found the information useful and the event productive.

■ A New Career and Technical Education (CTE) Administrators' workshop was held in September. The event targeted school individuals who have taken on new CTE administrative responsibilities in the last year. Twenty-two new administrators attend the full-day workshop. All OCTP staff was involved in presenting information and providing technical assistance.

## Helping Others in Need

**Department Employees Help Build "Governor's State of Michigan House" in Detroit Blitz Build 2003:** Nineteen CIS department employees worked with Governor Jennifer M. Granholm on the "Governor's State of Michigan House" for the Habitat for Humanity Detroit Blitz Build 2003 in September. Over the course of the Blitz Build week, a total of 120 state employees, 20 per day, volunteered. The "Governor's State of Michigan House" is being built for Winifred Jones and his three children. He is the first single father selected to be a recipient of a Habitat for Humanity Detroit house. Masco Corporation partnered with Habitat for Humanity to sponsor the "Governor's House." Gov. Granholm renamed it the "Governor's State of Michigan House" and dedicated the building of the house to the State of Michigan and the employee volunteers. First Gentleman Daniel G. Mulhern, who also worked on the construction, participated in the house blessing ceremony with the homeowner and Habitat for Humanity representatives.

**CIS Family Proud to Include Dad of Heroic 20-Year-Old:** CIS is proud to say Eli Robbins from the Bureau of Workers' & Unemployment Compensation Warehouse Publishing and Distribution is the father of one of the three young Detroit men, who received national attention for putting their lives at risk to save a tanker truck driver after an accident and carry him away from his vehicle before it exploded. When asked why they did it, the men said "If that was your father, wouldn't you want someone to help?" which is a testament to the parental role models these heroes had growing up. A Detroit Free Press editorial stated, "Star athletes can certainly inspire. But they are not ordinary people demonstrating extraordinary courage in life-and-death situations. There was no crowd Tuesday night to inspire the heroics of Cedric Redus, Latoris Shepherd and Michael Travis. But the three 20-year-olds didn't wait for one. They jumped from their car, scaled a fence and pulled a badly injured truck driver away from his burning gasoline tanker on I-75 in southwest Detroit. The trio then had to lift the injured man over the fence and out of harm's way, escaping moments before the rig exploded into a fireball. As usual with such heroes, they acted without really thinking, ruled for a few adrenaline-filled minutes only by the need of one human being to help another. They rose to the occasion, not grasping until afterward what they had risked to save a stranger."



*Proud father Eli Robbins from the CIS Bureau of Workers' & Unemployment Compensation Warehouse Publishing and Distribution (at right) with his son Latoris Shepherd (center) and Michael Travis (left). Shepherd and Travis are two of the three men who saved the tanker truck driver when his rig tipped over and exploded into flames early in September. The young men have been honored by the NAACP, City of Detroit, and state Legislature and appeared on national television for their heroic efforts.*